

White Whales--OUR FISHY FREAKS--Mud Puppies

And the Aquarium People's
Exciting Hunt After the
Blonde Beauties
of the Deep
Water.

THOUSANDS of people visited the New York Aquarium, in the old Castle Garden structure, during the past week, attracted by the exhibition for the first time in captivity of two young white whales. They were captured about ten days ago by Professor H. S. Butler, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, he having made a special excursion for the purpose.

Children came in merry groups, to stand by the tank side and scream with delight as they contemplated the easy grace with which the whales lifted their blunt shaped heads and then curve down and off to the other side. These delighted visitors were unconscious of the fact that the combined efforts of Professor Butler and the Aquarium attendants, aided by all that experience had taught, were being exerted to keep the leviathans alive. Despite all the care the female of the pair succumbed on Thursday to the rigors of her altered environment, and the Professor regretfully admitted that the preservation of the life of the remaining one was almost a hopeless task.

The question the Aquarium people are asking is, How long will a whale live in captivity?

Professor Butler brought the first and only white whales ever brought into this country, and has been associated with Barham, Professor Agassiz and several showmen in the whale catching business, and is the best informed man on that subject living to-day. He loves his whales with a more than human affection, and gives them the best part of his time and attention. If they do live it will be because they have got Professor Butler to prescribe for them.

Now, there is another spot in the great series of water compartments, that has no little interest for the naturalists and piscatorial experts. It can be reached by climbing up devious stairways and threading many halls, until the visitor comes to a little open-faced tank, where the menobranchius lateralis or "mud puppy" is sleeping lazily on the gravelly bottom of its own compartment. He is a repulsive creature, shaped like a lizard, with a slimy, scaleless skin and little "rod-shaped" feet.

The "mud puppy," as he is called by the layman, has the peculiarity of carrying his lungs on the outside of his head, immediately back of the ears, between the neck and shoulders, and when he breathes the cauliflower shaped flanges that flare out from his head like a Queen Anne collar flash and pale with the coming and going of his breath.

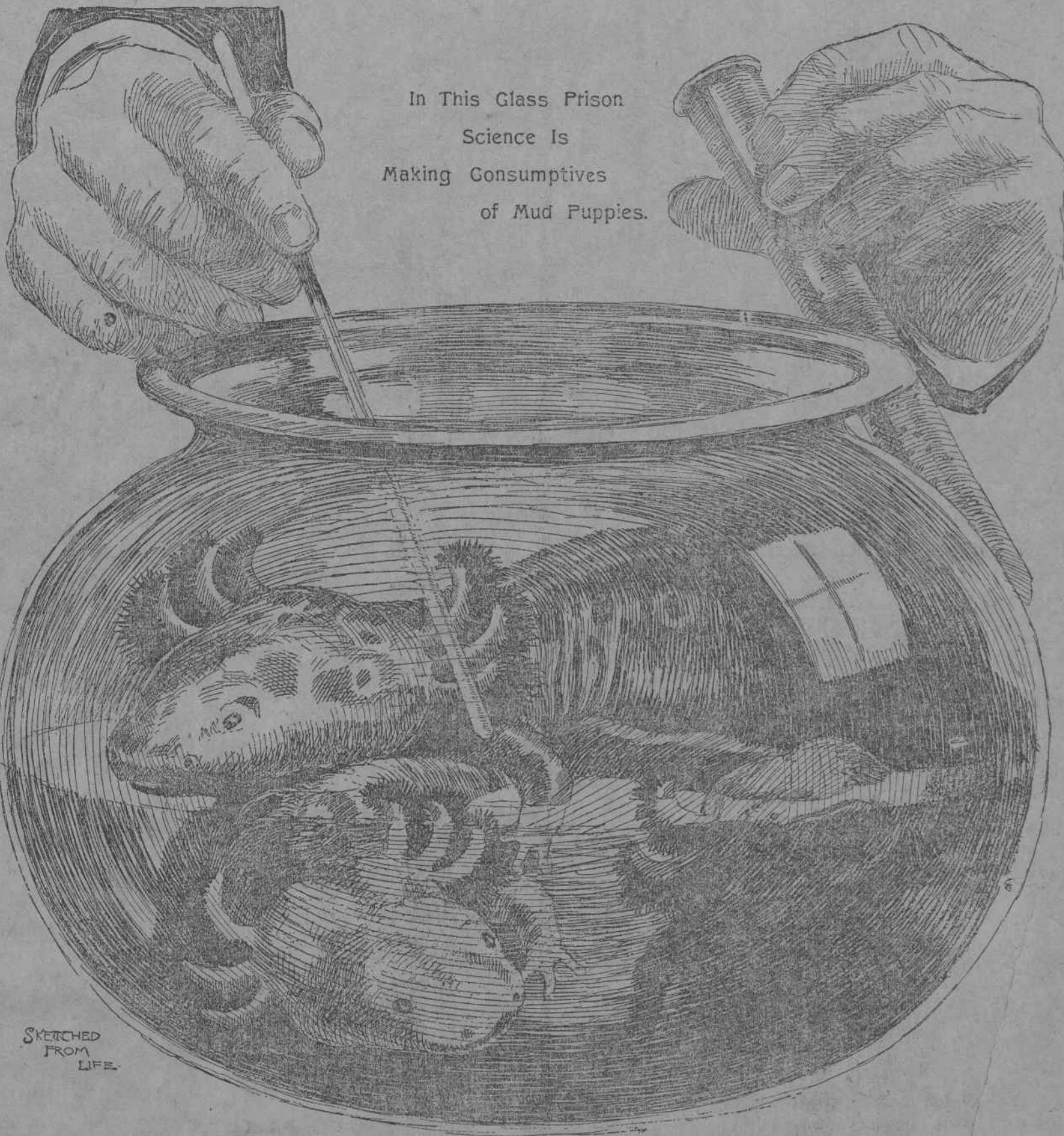
There is nothing so very interesting to the casual observer about the "mud puppy's" freakish way of carrying his respiratory organs, but medical men have found in him the possible solution of the cure for consumption, and the eyes of the medical world are to-day turned in the direction of the heretofore worthless and despised lateralis, for Dr. J. S. Sylvester, of the Surgical Division of Columbia University has two of the little fellows under his experimental eye, and is inoculating them with germs of consumption or bacteria of tuberculosis, to see what effect it will have upon their lungs as viewed from without.

His sole object is to learn how the infection occurs, how it acts on the membranes of the lungs, and how long before the "mud puppies" will die under his treatment.

Today's trials in the big tank the attendants and the professor were fighting against previous records and trying their best to keep the whales alive, while the medical man expects to aid humanity by destroying the "mud puppy" with germs of tuberculosis.

Among the attendants, the most important part members of the Aquarium's population, white as the doc or the petty, easily acquired and very ordinary lateralis overshadows all other possessions, and are regarded by him as the medium through which civilization can find succor for one of its most blighting ills.

What an end of hard work it required to land the white whales in New York, alive and well, from their home in the St. Lawrence! From the day they were taken from the stream until landed in the Aquarium, three days and nights of sleeplessness were the lot of Professor H. D. Butler, who had the taking in charge.



TRYING TO KILL MUD PUPPIES BY CONSUMPTION.

Dr. Sylvester is studying the effect on the little animals in the glass vessel after they have been inoculated, through infected water, with the germs of man's most dreadful disease.

"Nothing is more interesting and difficult than the capture of a white whale," said the Professor to a Journal representative at his home, at No. 204, Elliott place, Brooklyn, recently, "and then, after you have got possession of your victim, the next thing is to give him the proper attention, so that he will live. These last two whales I brought to the Aquarium are fine specimens, but are not as large as they will undoubtedly grow. They are, perhaps about a year and a half old at the present writing, and are pretty healthy specimens. I imagine it would be interesting for me to tell you how they were captured, and then you will begin to realize that catching whales is not like fishing for minnows.

In the first place, it is necessary to build a bottle-shaped corral of birch saplings along the stream, near the shore, where there are plenty of rock formations. The necessity for rock will be understood when I tell you that down the center of this bottle-shaped corral it is well to have a strip of land, so that the whales entering at the mouth will have two different depths of water to swim into, the side nearest to land being, of course, the shallowest. When the corral is ready for its

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Consi-

catch two or three hundred smallest part of the trap is up stream in search of seals, they are in search of at this trap is ready for work there is to keep your whale in after you down. As to waiting long for expect several every day, but if the best. They go in schools, a in great numbers. The mouth flanges out perhaps 200 yards at men the whale gets in its mud until he arrives at the other end. "Now we come to the most and that is transportation. Here in water and has lived in the w never for a moment been out of died with care. First of all he kept wet. A long box of suffice and filled with very wet seaweed, placed with his nose against a clo are pretty passive when they are box waiting to see what is about surprised at the treatment they re pear to understand the situation.

Just as soon as it is possible car, where the wind cannot get at would dry up and die in transit, given to wetting the blowhole until so to speak, in another supply.

How many pounds of seal can a About forty pounds a day. Th

In the neighborhood of the cel th. In an instant they can generate draws the eel into their mouths whirlwind.

But what of the fate of the to be attempting any care for his ve- well-conducted plan to slowly into practice by a physician for ence and mankind generally. While ing into the tank watching the wa pool Dr. Sylvester is with the a glass bowl watching the intro are making in the exposed lungs Proteins.

"See," exclaimed the physician, main pans and placed the infected lung of one of his subjects, "I complete inoculation. I have info it does not seem to have taken case. Here you will discern a a brane, which is a common sympto losis. I am especially interested in the germ influence through an ab membrane. I want to see just how end, and in what form it takes possession of the respiratory organs.

"I am of the opinion that I will discern no symptoms as the cages develop. There are many the various causes for consumption, and it is n it argued that it is not infectious. My exper strate this clearly, provided, of course, t puppy" are capable of absorbing the is Perhaps, through some foresight of ne with a breathing apparatus that at passes into their lungs. If they can se oxygen, perhaps they can separate the the water. That, however, remains t

Dr. Sylvester watches his con studies night and day, while the at and Professor Butler care for th whales, and the two questions rem unanswered:

"How long will the white whales ve
"When will the Menobranchius lateralis die?"

THE WHITE WHALE'S LAST STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY.

FROM SKETCHES ON THE SPOT.

